BACIPACIER /ESSENTIALS/JUNE 2014



BACKPACKER/ESSENTIALS



AUSTRALIA/NZ WHALE OF A TIME



GLOBAL BRAZIL TO BRITAIN



GETAWAYS
TOP DEALS IN OZ & NZ



CAPE ESCAPE SOUTH AFRICA



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ART TRAILS
ART ADVENTURES IN OZ



WHAT'S ON AUSTRALIA/NZ EVENTS

VOL 18 / N_o 3 JUNE 2014

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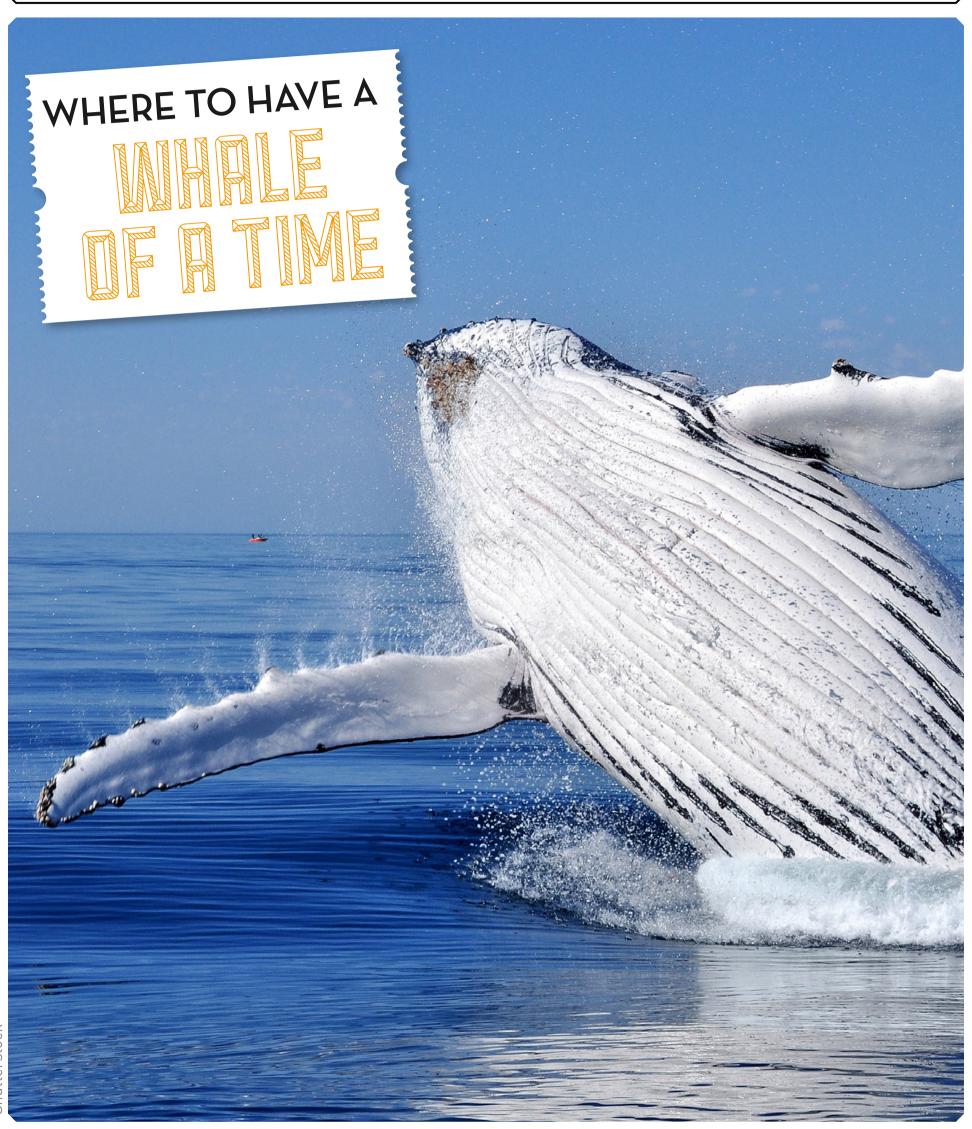
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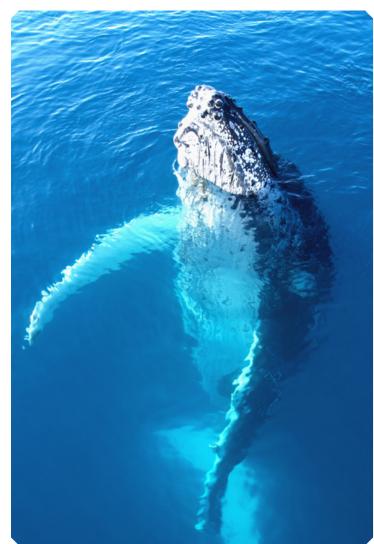
AUSTRALIA/NZ

WHALE WATCHING / NEWS / YOUR SAY



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/ WHALE WATCHING

WHALE OF A TIME

The great whale migration along the Aussie East Coast is on again from July to November and YHA has plenty of places to see the world's largest mammals in their natural playground.

The safe haven of Hervey Bay is almost as popular with whale watchers as it is with the whales themselves. Byron Bay, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Port Stephens, Sydney and Narooma are also hot spots along the "humpback highway".

Southern Right whales come close in to shore at Albany, while the clifftops of Port Elliot provide a scenic (and dry) balcony to watch these gentle giants show off.

Kaikoura, on the east coast of New Zealand's South Island is one of the only places in the world where you

can easily see sperm whales - the largest of the toothed whales, which can grow to over 15 metres.

Ask your YHA about member discounts on local whale watching cruises.





For a completely different whale encounter, head to Exmouth in Western Australia to dive with whale sharks (the world's largest fish) in beautiful Ningaloo Reef. The whale shark season ends in July.

Click here for more top wildlife encounters on (and in) the water



FLYING HIGH



TIGERAIR AUSTRALIA ROARS INTO THE WHITSUNDAYS, CAIRNS AND DARWIN

This year is proving to be a bumper year for Tigerair Australia with the low cost carrier launching not one, but three new services, to some of Australia's hottest destinations.

Sydneysiders can now take advantage of the only direct services between Sydney Airport and Whitsundays Coast Airport (Proserpine). The three weekly return flights will deliver travellers to the Whitsundays' doorstep every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

The new flights couldn't come at a better time, with the Whitsundays' Whitehaven Beach recently announced as the best beach in the South Pacific, in TripAdvisor's Traveller's Choice Awards. It should also be good news for Airlie Beach YHA. The hostel is conviently located right on the main street of Airlie Beach, which is known as the gateway to The Whitsundays. Among the YHA's great-value packages, backpackers can take advantage of ocean rafting, maxi yacht and tall ship sailing adventures out to Whitehaven Beach.

Cairns and Darwin have also benefited from the low cost carrier's expanding network, with brand new daily services operating from Brisbane to both destinations.

The daily return flights will bring quick and affordable access to the reef, rainforest, action and relaxation of Far North Queensland and the tropical Top End attractions of the Northern Territory's capital. Even better, by combining a budget Tiger Airways airfare with great value accommodation at Cairns Central YHA or Darwin YHA you'll have more in your pocket to enjoy the destination.

HAVE THE YHA TO YOURSELVES

Rent-a-YHA gives your friends, family or group the opportunity to rent a whole building for a short break. Several Australian YHAs also allow you to rent half the building, with your group taking advantage of separate facilities to use exclusively during your stay – great for smaller get-togethers.

Whether it's a special event, family reunion, or just an excuse to get a group of friends away together, Rent-a-YHA is the best option for creating an amazing trip.

From the beach to the bush the YHAs are perfectly located for a group getaway.

Visit yha.com.au for more



New Zealand also offers a number of properties that are great for group getaways and can be rented exclusively.

Find out more at yha.co.nz



KANGAROO ISLAND ADVENTURE TOUR



2 DAYS / 1 NIGHT

SPECIAL PRICE!

WAS \$436

PER ADULT DEPARTING ADELAIDE

TOUR CODE KI2CC

Includes:

- Free hostel/hotel pick-ups
- Return SeaLink coach and ferry travel
- •2 day tour Rob's Sheep Shearing, Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Distillery, Seal Bay, Little Sahara, Remarkable Rocks, Admirals Arch and Hanson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary Stay at Vivonne Bay Lodge and enjoy activities such as kayaking,
 - mountain biking, sand-boarding, swimming and bushwalking or just relax on the huge outdoor deck with a drink.
 - •1 breakfast, 2 lunches and 1 dinner

Stay an extra 2 nights at Penneshaw, Kangaroo Island from only \$40pp

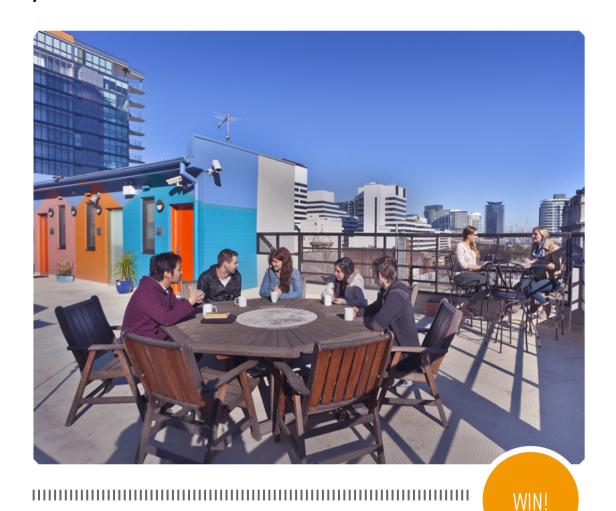
TOUR CODE KI34CC

TO BOOK:

Call +61 8 82028678 Visit kiadventuretours.com.au email bookings@kiadventuretours.com.au or your local Travel Agent

Travel Agents call 1300 655 990

*Prices valid for travel to 31st August 2014



Got a place to nominate? Want to win a great travel prize?

Tyrell will be receiving a \$100 voucher from Kathmandu. Visit kathmandu.com.au.

Tell us your favourite YHA (in less than 100 words) and send it, with your contact details, to

backpackeressentials@yha.com.au



MELBOURNE CENTRAL YHA

......

- +61 3 9621 2523
- ◆ melbcentral@yha.com.au
- yha.com.au



NOMINATED BY NICK WALSH, VIC

My favourite YHA is Melbourne Central. It is ideally located on the edge of the CBD and is walking distance from Southern Cross station. Major city attractions and shopping are also right on the doorstep.

It is comfortably refurbished with compact kitchens, TV, computer and WiFi access available on all floors.

Staff are friendly and obliging, providing valuable information on local attractions. A 5 minute walk to Etihad Stadium or a pleasant half hour stroll through the city to the mighty MCG also make it the ideal base for an exciting AFL winter weekend.

WIN A NEW ZEALAND SKI BREAK

To celebrate winter, we're giving readers the chance to win a three-night family ski break on the world class Wanaka ski slopes in New Zealand's stunning South Island.

Simply jump onto the **YHA New Zealand Facebook** page and tell us what your best New Zealand winter escape is and why.

The prize? Cardrona two-day lift passes for two adults and two children, plus three nights' accommodation at YHA's fantastic Wanaka or Queenstown hostels. Entries close 23 June 2014.

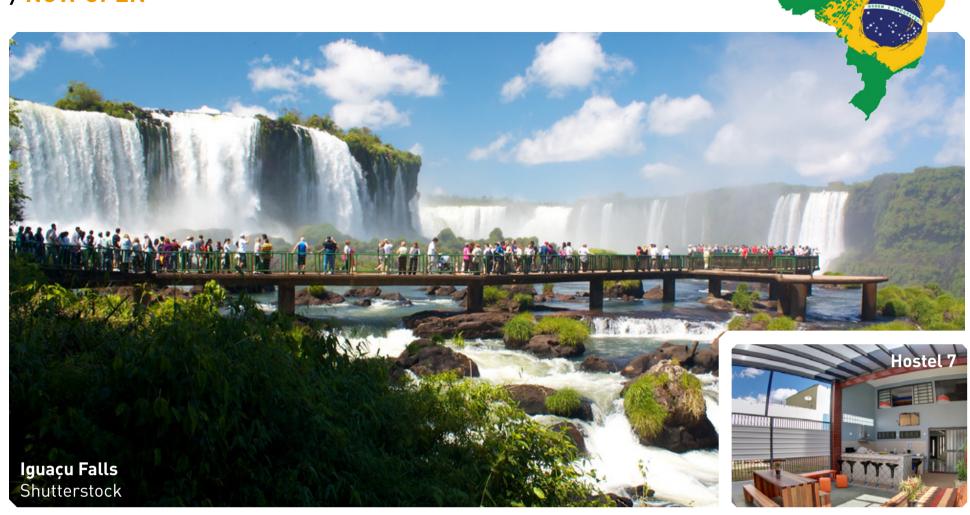
Visit facebook.com/YHANewZealand to enter



GLOBAL

OLÉ BRAZIL / GRAND DESIGNS UK / GLOBAL GOALS





OLÉ BRAZIL

From big name sporting events to backpackers looking to experience its famous party spirit and scenery, Brazil is so hot right now. The country's YHA network is also in the spotlight, with several new hostels opening in top travel spots.

The capital, Brasilia, can now boast its first truly world-class hostel, with the opening of **Hostel 7**. The 38-bed hostel's all-ensuite rooms give design nods to the 60s and some of Brazil's famous sons such as architect Oscar Niemeyer and artist Athos Bulcão. Impressive facilities range from the standard communal lounge and kitchen, 24-hour reception and airconditioning, to freebies like breakfast, Wi-Fi, and coffee (brazilian of course), and even added extras such as Cable/Apple TV, bike rental and video games.





Brazil's largest city, São Paulo, welcomes centrally-located **Okupe Hostel Jardins**, on famous Avenue Rebolledo, offers incredible value for money, while the beautifully converted mansion, **Traipu Eco Hostel**, in the city's green Pacaembu neighbourhood will also organise cultural, artistic and therapeutic courses for guests.

Three of the country's biggest destinations are also getting in on the act. **Manaus Hostel**, is the perfect base to explore the mighty Amazon River and the jungle city of Manaus. Rio de Janeiro's best street parties, nightlife and fabled beaches are just minutes away from **Caipi Hostel**. It promises free Wi-Fi, breakfast, city tours, plus free nightly caipirinhas. We are especially excited about the new **Concept Design Hostel**. Located 100 metres from Cataratas Avenue in Foz do Iguaçu, the main corridor to world wonder, Iguaçu Falls, this 24-hour, eco hostel offers hotel standards at hostel prices.

YHA members receive 25% off Insight, Berlitz and Footprint travel books purchased online here. Quote promo code YHAMEMBERS.





Cambridge YHA



Liverpool YHA



Edale YHA

GRAND DESIGNS UK

It's exciting times for YHA in England and Wales. Not only have they announced plans to open a brand new YHA in the iconic seaside city of Brighton by the end of the year, a number of the network's 138 city and regional hostels have recently undergone sleek makeovers.

A long-established favourite amongst city centre hostels, **Cambridge YHA**'s convenient location (two minutes to the station, 15 minutes to the historic university town's centre) is now complimented by modern interior and upgraded facilities, following head-to-toe renovations. Guests can now take advantage of 122 beds, including double rooms and 11 ensuite rooms, and the cool new Scholars bar/cafe.

Also enjoying a facelift is **Liverpool YHA**, where facilities have been transformed from tired to trendy with fresh décor, furniture and finishes. The new bar area is a sure highlight, with nods to Liverpool's most famous export – The Beatles – and the city's other well-known landmarks.

Head west from Liverpool and you'll reach the Peaks District, home to windswept moors and idyllic dales, rocky tors, pretty villages, and historic homes such as Chatsworth House (aka Mr Darcy's Pemberley to Pride and Prejudice fans). It's also home to superbly-located **Edale YHA**, which recently reopened in time for the summer calendar of caving, kayaking, horse riding and hiking.

Hot on their heels, **Snowdon Pen-y-Pass YHA** at the foot of Wales' might Mt Snowdon - Britain's highest mountain south of the Scottish border - reopens its doors at the end of June 2014. The former mountain lodge will offer new facilities including a café and ensuite rooms, with a refit of the main building and development of the property's barn into state-of-the-art accommodation. Croeso.

Check out more grand designs at yha.org.uk



BIG BLOG EXCHANGE IS BACK



Changing the world using the power of blogs



The world's biggest blogging competition is back. Hostelling International is once again giving 16 passionate, talented and adventurous bloggers the chance to swap countries and blogs for 10 days as part of the Big Blog Exchange.

Whether you have one reader or one million, everyone from aspiring bloggers to experienced web wordsmiths can enter, whatever your blog topic of choice.

First launched last year, the Big Blog Exchange saw over 1,000 bloggers from 173 countries enter, with the 16 lucky winners swapping lives in Argentina and New Zealand, Brazil and France, South Africa and Belgium, USA and Spain, Iceland and Israel, UK and Singapore, The Philippines and Germany, Canada and Malaysia.

From floating in Iceland's famous Blue Lagoon, and tango dancing in the streets of Buenos Aires, to meeting South Africa's famous wildlife, last year's bloggers trekked, tasted and triumphed their way around the world. Now it's your chance to be whisked off to a different corner of the world to experience another culture for 10 amazing days (from 31 October to 9 November 2014) and blog about it.

Competition opens 23 July 2014.

Visit bigblogexchange.org





CRAIC' N' CRASH IRELAND

Do you love adventure? If you fancy getting out into the wilds of Ireland and having some "craic" before you "crash" in one of the country's YHAs for the night, then YHA Ireland's new wild weekend breaks are for you.

Living up to their name (craic is the Irish Gaelic word for fun), the Craic'n' Crash budget breaks are all about the outdoors, adventure, activities and meeting new people – not just hitting the pub.

Adventures include abseiling, surfing, paintballing, biking, biking, kayaking, and many more activities in Ireland's scenic spots – a great way to enjoy the Emerald Isle's incredibly rich history, culture and scenery. There's also great value to be had, with prices ranging from €60 - €165 per person including all activities, meals, and two or three nights' stay at one of YHA Ireland's 21 hostels from the main cities to stunning rural locations.

For the calendar of upcoming Craic' n' Crash weekends visit anoige.ie



Get a taste of what's on offer

GLOBAL GOALS

TO CELEBRATE THE BIGGEST SPORTING EVENT IN THE WORLD KICKING OFF THIS MONTH. DAMIAN HALL CHECKS OUT SOME OF THE WORLD'S TOP SPORTS EVENTS



Sport is where we can often see a nation's values, traditions and idiosyncrasies crystallised, so attending a sporting event on your travels can be a window into a new culture (that or a good laugh and plenty of beer and shouting).

THE BIG ONE

What: The World Cup

Why: Bar war or Masterchef, this is the world's biggest event - period. The best players, from 32 countries, playing easily the world's most popular sport (that's soccer, btw). From Ghana to Germany, millions will be watching on the telly box, but imagine being able to say "I was there" next time someone gets sent off for a headbutt in the final? If you can't get there, the domestic league with arguably the best atmosphere in world football is in Argentina, especially the Boca Juniors versus River Plate superclásico.

Where & when: Brazil in June-July 2014; Russia in 2018; Qatar in 2022 (controversially).

GOING FOR GOLD

What: Olympic Games

Why: The second biggest sporting event in the world. It's a time for triumph, tears and waytoo muscular women. It's a time for feeling emotional about sportspeople you hadn't heard of till three minutes ago. Nothing really conjures up drama and stories of the improbable like the Olympics.

Where & when: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2016; Tokyo, Japan in 2020.

EGG-SELLENT

What: Rugby in New Zealand

Why: For thunder and lightning, brute force and man on man action, it doesn't get any muddier, bloodier, or better than rugby.

Where and when: England, September-October 2015.

ACE IN THE HOLE

What: Wimbledon

Why: The obsessively manicured grass, strawberries and cream, the rain... few things are so frightfully English as Wimbledon. The oldest international tennis tournament and the only one played on the game's original surface.

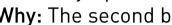
Where and when: England, June-July.

YANKS A LOT

What: A North America sport

Why? Baseball (MLB), basketball (NBA) and gridiron (NFL, or 'American football') are central to most people's view of US culture. They've also featured in classic films like Field of Dreams, Any Given Sunday and, er, Teen Wolf.

Where and when: NFL fixtures at nfl.com. NBA atnba.com and baseball at mlb.mlb.com









term to sum myself up. But it can just as easily be applied to others: snow pilgrim.

\snō-pil-gram\noun Onewhojourneys from mountain to mountain as a devotee of snow sport.

New Zealand is a snow pilgrim's haven with world-class ski fields on both islands. The mountains are high which means consistent snow that's topped up by snow making systems at most ski areas. The terrain is varied from beginner slopes to bowls and long runs. And the country is small enough that following the snow and the good weather is relatively easy. If the wind is blowing a gale in the adrenaline-pumping, après ski town of Queenstown, you can head to Wanaka or even further north to the geothermal village of Hanmer Springs, where soaking in the hot springs after a day on the slopes is almost a requirement. And that's just for starters.

New Zealand is spoilt for choice.

Well, to be precise, the South Island is spoilt for choice.

If New Zealand is a snow pilgrim's haven, then the South Island is its Mecca. But don't skip the handful of slopes on the North Island if you've got the time and budget for both islands.

I plan my New Zealand winter pilgrimage with as much diligence as a pilgrim plans their walk on the Camino de Santiago or the Great Ocean Road. But I need to stretch my dollars for all they're worth. Let's face it, being a snow pilgrim doesn't come cheap. Though we do get more bang for our Australian buck in New Zealand, spend a few days in the powder and you still rack up the costs.



So here's an avalanche of ideas to keep those costs down.

USEFUL INFO

New Zealand Ski Season:

The ski season usually runs from June to October. That means you can hit New Zealand's slopes when the Northern Hemisphere snow has long since melted. There are longer, sunnier bluebird days in September and early October. Avoid the school holidays if possible! **Tap here** for a list of Public and School holidays.

Easy Access:

Travel from Australia to the South Island is easy with direct flights into both Queenstown and Christchurch. A number of ski areas are within 1.5hr drive from either airport.

BUY MULTI-DAY PASSES

A good chunk of your cash will go to lift passes but multi-day passes offer better day-to-day rates. There isn't just one multi-day pass that's valid at all ski fields (yet!). So, see Treble Cone and Cardrona's multi-day passes. If commercial fields are still too much, try a Chill Pass at Canterbury's club fields (you don't have to be a member!). They're smaller fields with less flash facilities, but the terrain is great. Most commercial and club fields offer student discounts.

HIRE GEAR IN TOWN

If you're travelling light, or you forgot something at home, hire gear in town and not on the mountain.

PACK A PICNIC

Commercial fields have bars or cafés, but dining on the mountain can add up. Instead pack your own nibbles. If you're dying to eat out for dinner, look for BYO (Bring Your Own Wine) restaurants in town. They'll charge a small 'corkage' fee but your grocery store red or white will save you paying the restaurant vino mark-up.

Clockwise from right: skiing The Remarkables; Coronet Peak, Queenstown; Cardrona après ski.

Tony Harrington NZSki Ltd, Cardrona, Camilla Stoddart NZSki Ltd







TAKE THE BUS

Bussing is an inexpensive way to get around. My favourite thing about it? All I have to do is enjoy the landscapes. While busses get you from one ski hotspot to another, they won't get you up the mountain. Never fear! Most ski areas offer reasonably-priced shuttles (for as little as \$15 return).

BOOK A BED

In New Zealand, you're not stuck with having to stay on the mountain so backpacking delivers the best (and most social) bang for your budget buck. Most **YHAs near ski fields** offer amenities like drying rooms, gear storage and tuning stations with added bonuses of roaring fires and/or spa pools. While bonuses vary from hostel to hostel, you're guaranteed a good price, large kitchens and a warm bed. Be sure to book well in advance. YHAs fill up fast.

New Zealand's slopes can satisfy every snow pilgrim. Not only is there plenty of downhill skiing and boarding but there's heli-skiing, glacier skiing, Nordic skiing, terrain parks and dedicated beginner areas.

My snow pilgrimage is plotted and underway and I'm standing at my first stop – the crater rim and saddle at Turoa Ski Area on the North Island's Mt Ruapehu. And it hits me how unique this is: I'm snowboarding on an active volcano. There are so few places in the world for that.

Mt Hutt, Canterbury. Camilla Stoddart NZSki Ltd



WHERE TO STAY

YHA QUEENSTOWN CENTRAL

BOOK

NOW

- +64 3 442 7400
- queenstown@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

YHA QUEENSTOWN LAKEFRONT

- +64 3 442 8413
- queenstownlakefront@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

YHA WANAKA

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- wanaka@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

YHA LAKE TEKAPO

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- ♦ laketekapo@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

YHA CHRISTCHURCH

- +64 3 366 6564
- rollestonhouse@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

YHA SPRINGFIELD

- +64 3 318 4740
- springfield@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

YHA HANMER SPRINGS

- +64 3 315 7472
- hanmersprings@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

YHA OHAKUNE

- +64 3 385 8797
- ohakune@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

YHA TAUPO

- +64 7 378 3311
- taupo@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

YHA NATIONAL PARK

- +64 7 892 2870
- nationalpark@yha.co.nz
- yha.co.nz

In a minute, I'll put my legs to the test and begin the 1,200 metre vertical descent. Then, I'll head down the mountain and into bustling Ohakune for a hot cuppa. In New Zealand, ski areas are near towns with cafés, bars, restaurants and all the other activities travellers to New Zealand rave about. And I'll partake – my winter pilgrimage isn't just about the slopes. But it all takes time and money, so I'm glad I've stretched my budget. Now, when I head back across the ditch, I won't have quite as much money in my pocket but I'll have a wealth of experiences to carry me through the summer

months until my next New Zealand snow pilgrimage.

PLAN YOUR PILGRIMAGE

SOUTH ISLAND

Queenstown & Wanaka

Queenstown offers row after row of snowy mountains and New Zealand's biggest winter event, the Queenstown Winterfestival. Wanaka mixes small town charm with big time slopes. Experience the freedom to ski and ride at the two largest ski areas near Wanaka: Cardrona and Treble Cone. Queenstown's Coronet Peak and the Remarkables offer cheaper rates for additional days on the slopes. Or if the downhills scare you and you like the flats, try crosscountry skiing at Snow Farm.

Canterbury

Canterbury stretches from Alps to the ocean with Mt Hutt as a giant amongst giants. Mt Hutt has New Zealand's longest ski season and is only 1 ½ hours drive from Christchurch. Canterbury offers New Zealand's biggest variety of ski areas including

Mt Hutt, Porters and Roundhill.

Check out Mt Hutt's **lift passes** or a single **CHILL pass** for multiple Canterbury mountains.

NORTH ISLAND

The central North Island boasts New Zealand's largest and **highest ski areas**, Whakapapa, Turoa and Tukino, all on an active volcano and within the Tongariro National Park – NZ's first national park and a dual World Heritage site.



DEAL.



YHA DEALS IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND



PORT STEPHENS WHALE WATCHING



With a harbour double the size of Sydney's, giant sand dunes, an A-Z of activities and wildlife. Port Stephens is your great escape this season. Enjoy:

- ◆ 2 nights' accommodation
- 3-hour whale watch cruise
- Sand boarding adventure
- FREE WIFI
- FREE 1 day bike hire

Priced from AU\$135 per person multi-share. Room upgrades available. Valid 9 June to 30 September 2014.

Dolphins & Dunes Deal also available BOOK NOW

PORT STEPHENS YHA

......

- +61 2 4982 1921
- portstephens_samurai@yha.com.au

KAIKOURA PADDLE **POWER**



Whales, penguins, dolphins, seals! Tour the Kaikoura coastline by kayak and enjoy one of Lonely Planet's 'Top Choice' activities.

- ◆ 1 night at YHA Kaikoura
- Half day guided kayak
- GORE-TEX dry pants (Jun-Aug), paddle jacket, booties, dry camera bag

Priced from NZ\$107 per person multi-share, \$150 p.p. twin share, \$245 for two in a double room. YHA members only. Valid to BOOK 30 September 2014.

NOW

YHA KAIKOURA

- +64 3 319 5931
- ♦ kaikoura@yha.co.nz

......

SHARK DIVE SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Experience the once-in-alifetime adventure of diving with Great White Sharks on this full day tour, including:

- ◆ 1 night at Port Lincoln YHA
- Calypso Star Charters full day shark cage diving tour
- All meals inc. breakfast, morning and afternoon tea, lunch, unlimited coffee and soft drinks
- Use of 7mm wetsuit, hood, boots, gloves and mask

Priced AU\$495 per person. Departs selected dates. Valid to 31 March 2015.

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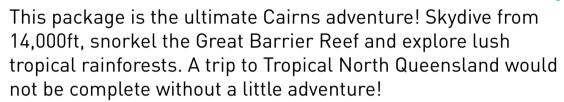
BOOK NOW

PORT LINCOLN YHA

- +64 8 8682 3605
- portlincoln@yha.com.au



ULTIMATE CAIRNS: SKYDIVE, REEF & RAINFOREST



- ◆ 3 nights' multi-share accommodation at Cairns Central YHA
- ◆ 14,000ft Skydive
- ◆ 1 day rainforest and waterfalls tour inc. lunch and afternoon tea
- ◆ Day trip to outer Great Barrier Reef including guided snorkel tour, buffet lunch, morning and afternoon tea, and all equipment hire

Priced from AU\$604 per person (YHA members). Standard rates available. Valid to 31 March 2015.

CAIRNS CENTRAL YHA

- +61 7 4051 0772
- ♦ cairnscentral@yha.com.au

APOLLO BAY 3RD NIGHT FREE



Take your time and enjoy a trip along the stunning Great Ocean Road. Stay for 2 nights and receive a 3rd night absolutely FREE!

Prices start from AU\$63 for three nights - that's only \$21 per night in a 4 share dorm!

Valid for all room types for stays until 31 October 2014. Excludes 7-9 June.



BLUE MOUNTAINS YULEFEST 11-12 JULY 2014



BOOK

NOW

Winter is a magical time in the Blue Mountains, with crisp days and clear blue skies just perfect for outdoor delights by day and warming meals by the cosy fire at night. Enjoy some mid-year cheer with this cool Yulefest deal which includes:

- ◆ 2 nights' in a double or family room at Blue Mountains YHA
- ◆ 3-course Christmas-themed dinner on Saturday night (BYO)
- Daily breakfast

Priced from AU\$299 per double room and from \$421 per family room. Ensuite rooms available. Family room based on two adults, two children under 18. Valid 11-12 July 2014.

Work up an appetite with Blue Mountains YHA's Adventure Deals



BLUE MOUNTAINS YHA

- +61 2 5237 7899
- ♦ bluemountains@yha.com.au

WANAKA SNOW 'N SLEEP



Speed down long, uncrowded slopes and carve up the powder at Wanaka and Queenstown's two largest ski areas - Treble Cone and Cardrona. Choose from two deals from YHA Wanaka exclusive to YHA members:

Beginner's Deal

- 2 nights at YHA Wanaka
- Treble Cone's First Timer Package: 1-day beginner lift access, 2hr group lesson, ski/snowboard rental, scenic chairlift ride on Home Basin Express, hot drink from Day Lodge Café

Priced at NZ\$155 p.p. multi-share and \$374 for two people in a private ensuite room. Valid to 31 July 2014.

Multi-Day Deal

- 6 nights at YHA Wanaka
- 5-day OnePassNZ lift pass for Treble Cone and/ or Cardrona. Consecutive or non-consecutive days. Pass can be swapped for and redeemed at a number of Queenstown activities

Priced from NZ\$618 p.p. multi-share and \$1,428 for 2 people in a private ensuite room. Valid to 31 July 2014.

Wanaka Burger, Beer 'n Bed Deal also available

BOOK NOW

YHA WANAKA

- +64 3 443 1880
- ♦ wanaka@yha.co.nz

HOKITIKA TREETOPS WALK



Channel your inner Tarzan in the beautiful West Coast rainforest treetops. Stroll through the canopy on the 20m high platform, gently sway on the Mahinapua Springboard, or get your adrenaline fix by climbing the 40m high Hokitika Tower for views of Lake Mahinapua, the snowcapped Southern Alps and the Tasman Sea. Package includes:

- ◆ 2 nights for two in a twin/double room at YHA Hokitika
- ◆ Entry to the Treetop Walk for two
- ◆ Entry to the bushman's outdoor bath at YHA Hokitika

Priced from NZ \$185 for two people. YHA members only. Valid to 31 August 2014.



TEKAPO STARGAZER SPECIAL



Turn off the lights and wish upon infinite stars at Tekapo's Mt John Observatory, in the heart of one of only eight international Dark Sky Reserves in the world. Navigate the night skies and peer through powerful telescopes for a truly out of this world experience. Package includes:

- ◆ 1 night multi-share at YHA Lake Tekapo
- Mt John Observatory night tour with Earth & Sky
- ◆ Transfers from YHA to Mt John
- ◆ Hot chocolate at the candle-lit summit-top Astro Café

Priced from NZ\$145 per person. YHA members only. Valid to 4 July 2014.



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Experience the best of Brisbane with three "must do" day tours in the sunny city. Tour the iconic XXXX Brewery, enjoy a scenic cruise down the Brisbane River, and cuddle koalas at Lone Pine Sanctuary.

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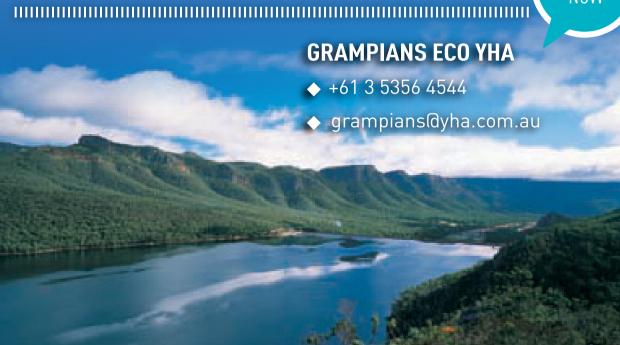
GRAMPIANS STAY 3, PAY 2



The beautiful Grampians National Park is made for mid-year mini breaks. Get off the beaten track and let loose on a rock climbing or 4WD adventure, or tackle some of the country's great walks. Then follow up the fun and fresh air with a warming glass of local wine in front of the wood heater at Grampians Eco YHA in Halls Gap. Stay 2 nights and get your third night free.

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Phillip Island's natural beauty and laidback lifestyle make it the perfect place to relax. Don't miss the famous penguins parade, visit the Koala Conservation Centre. walk deserted beaches. explore the rugged coastline or take a wildlife cruise. Take advantage of Phillip Island YHA's great-value specials:

Stay 4, Pay 3

◆ 4 nights from AU\$94.50 per person in a 6-share room - save \$45!

Private Getaway

◆ 4 nights from AU\$297 for two people in a private double/twin suite - save a massive \$99!

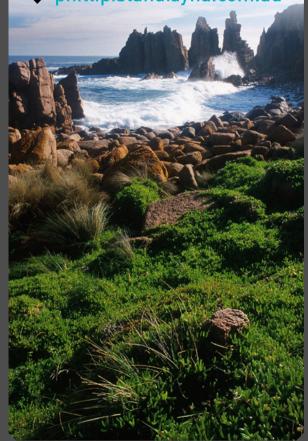
Valid 7 June - 31 August 2014.

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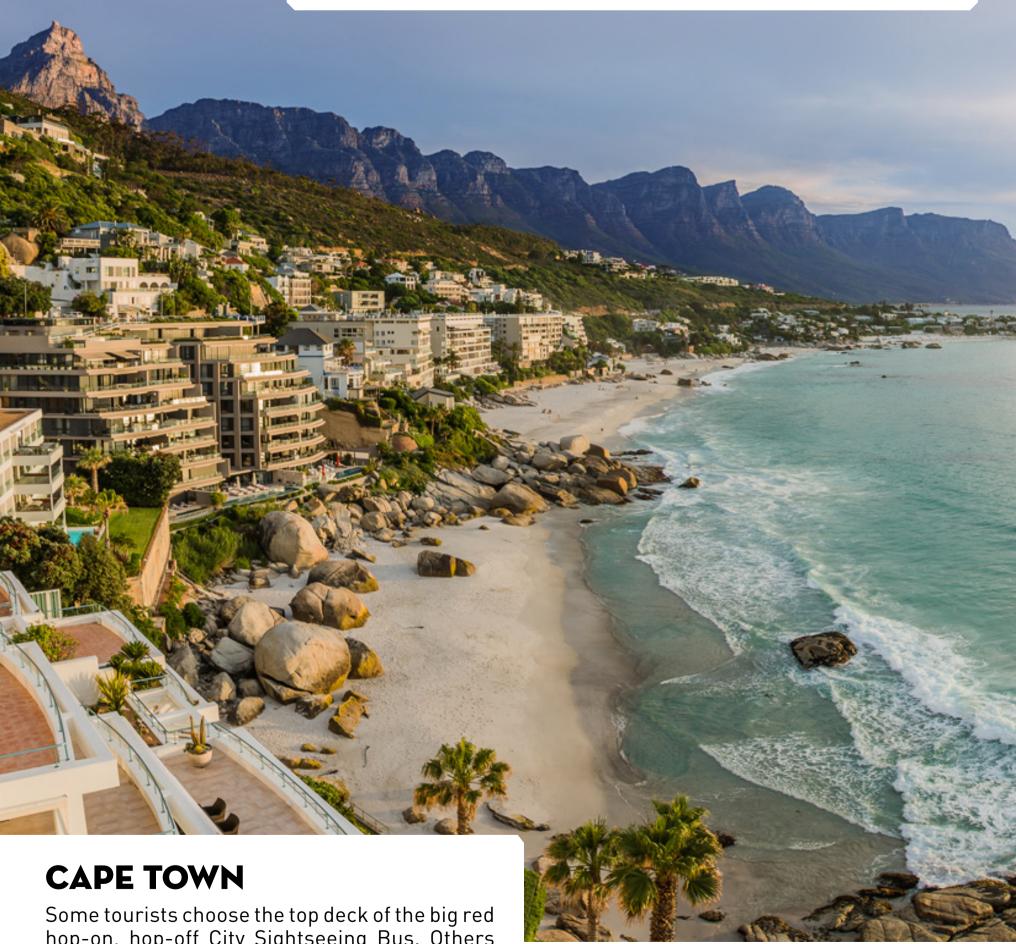
FEATURE / SOUTH AFRICA



SOUTH AFRICA IS THE PERFECT LOCATION FOR AN EXTENDED BACKPACKING TRIP, WRITES **STEVE MCKENNA**.



in hand, South Africa has many options for an extended trip. Steve McKenna outlines some of the best whilst Elinor Sheargold gives the lowdown on visiting Kruger National Park:



Some tourists choose the top deck of the big red hop-on, hop-off City Sightseeing Bus. Others head straight for the roof of Table Mountain. In my bid to see - and get to know - Cape Town, South Africa's oldest and most bewitchingly beautiful city, I'm whizzing through it on two wheels.

One of Cape Town's best beaches.

Shutterstock

Highly recommended, the AWOL City Cycle Tour starts and finishes at the Victoria & Albert Waterfront, a huge working harbour-cumleisure and retail development comprising atmospheric docks, souvenir-packed malls, seafood restaurants, vintage warehouses and photogenic statues (including one of a certain Nelson Mandela).

Navigating a mix of tranquil bike paths and traffic-thronged streets, we soak up Cape Town's bounty of exotic sights, sounds and smells, and pull in at several points of interest, where our Capetonian guide Sally de Jager regales some intriguing nuggets about the 'Mother City'. Founded by the Dutch East India Company in 1652, it's now the most-visited destination in the 'Rainbow Nation' (the moniker given to post-Apartheid South Africa, a proudly multi-cultural country where English is one of 11 official languages).

We pause at the Company's Gardens (a delightful oasis in the bustling CBD, where the first Dutch settlers grew fruit and veg), the Bo-Kaap (a peaceful Muslim quarter renowned for its brightly-painted houses and spicy 'Cape Malay' dishes), and Green Point (one of the epicentres of the 2010 FIFA World Cup and a leafy gateway to the city's postcard-perfect Atlantic coastline). Appetite whetted, post-tour I continue my





A mural showing Nelson Mandela, top, Bo-Kaap's brightly-painted houses, above, and the Woodstock neighbourhod, below.

Shutterstock, Steve McKenna

ON TOP OF ITS **MOVIE-STAR LOOKS**, THERE'S A FUNKY CAFE SCENE, COSMOPOLITAN CUISINE AND HEAPS OF **ARTISTIC FLAIR**...



explorations on foot and come to the conclusion that I could quite happily live in **Cape Town**. On top of its moviestar looks, there's a funky cafe scene, cosmopolitan cuisine and heaps of artistic flair, especially in Woodstock, an inner-city neighbourhood with boutique stores and galleries, foodie markets and creative murals. This year is a particularly exciting time to visit, as a calendar of eye-opening events and festivals are marking Cape Town's stint as the 2014 **World Design Capital**.

And with a favourable exchange rate, Australian travellers get fantastic bang for their buck.







Great White Sharks at Gansbei; Meerkat spotting tour on the Garden Route; Winelands outside of Cape Town.

Steve McKenna. Shutterstock

GARDEN ROUTE

Cape Town is addictive, but you must leave (eventually). First up, there's the side-tripping possibilities: the Cape Winelands (where you'll savour top-quality reds and whites), the Cape Peninsula (a craggy, beach-strewn promontory upon which baboons and penguins frolic) and, of course, Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 18 years.

However, arguably the most tantalising of all out-of-town options is the Garden Route. Technically, it runs from Mossel Bay - 390km east of Cape Town - to Storms River - 170km west of Port Elizabeth (PE). But to most travellers, it basically means Cape Town to PE. You'll need a week to appreciate this enchanting region (more if possible), plus lots of memory space on your camera.

The scenery is frequently breath-taking: the endless sandy beaches of Wilderness and surf-tastic Jeffreys Bay, the birdlife-rich lagoons around Knysna and Plettenberg Bay, and the lush mountainous forests, waterfalls and ravines of Tsitsikamma National Park, where adrenaline-fuelled activities abound, from kayaking and kloofing (canyoning) to tubing and bungee jumping (the 216m Bloukrans River Bridge is the world's highest commercial bridge bungee). After something

more leisurely? Hire mountain bikes and Segways from super-chilled Tsitsikamma Backpackers.

Those seeking memorable animal encounters won't be disappointed. Game reserves and sanctuaries dot the Garden Route, including **Tenikwa Awareness Centre**, where you'll come face to face with wild cats, such as cheetahs and caracals.

Off the sleepy seaside town of Gansbei, you can go nose to nose with **Great Whites**. Daredevils go cage-diving with them, though it's possible to observe this fascinating interaction between man and shark from the boat deck.

Another unforgettable experience is watching **meerkats** - those cute-looking mongooses - emerge from their underground hovels for some early-morning sun-baking.

One of the most popular tours is from Oudtshoorn, a town dubbed the 'Ostrich Capital of the World'. You can feed and ride these flightless birds at the **Cango Ostrich Farm** and, later, if you're so inclined, you can sample one. Ostrich kebabs and sausages feature in the nightly braais (barbecues) at Oudtshoorn's aptly-named Backpackers Paradise.







THE WILD COAST

As gorgeous as it is, some travellers reckon the Garden Route doesn't feel like 'the real Africa' (or at least the Africa of their imaginations), and instead resembles a fusion of western Europe and coastal New South Wales. This is not something you could ever say about the Wild Coast.

Starting 300km east of Port Elizabeth, this beguilingly rustic region was the birth - and burial - place of Nelson Mandela, and is dominated by the affable Xhosa-speaking people, whose humble rondavels (round mudbrick, thatched-roof homes) cluster the rolling green hills that overlook a chain of wondrously picturesque coves and beaches.

Mostly accessible by cattle-strewn roads, the Wild Coast's clutch of Fair Trade-certified seaside hostels are not only fun places to stay, they're heavily involved with the local communities; financing and coordinating uplifting projects to boost education, healthcare and grassroots businesses.

You'll gain a deeper insight by joining the hostels' absorbing village tours. Visit schools (whose adorably smiley pupils will steal your heart), learn snippets of Xhosa language and culture and enjoy traditional dances, meals and mystical rituals that will long stay in the memory.

The Wild Coast is perfect for outdoorsy types. I enjoy some 'beach-and-bush' horse riding from Chintsa's excellent Buccaneers Lodge & Backpackers, and embark on many invigorating hikes, including a three-hour jaunt from the hip-and-happening Coffee Shack in Coffee Bay to the uber-mellow hamlet of Mdumbi, where surfers gravitate to tackle a classic point break.

I'm happy to relax and receive a soothing massage from Mdumbi masseuse Lindeka, before joining a friendly bunch of South African and foreign travellers for cool beers and a fish braai at **Mdumbi backpackers' cafe**. The Wild Coast, we all agree, will be a wrench to leave.

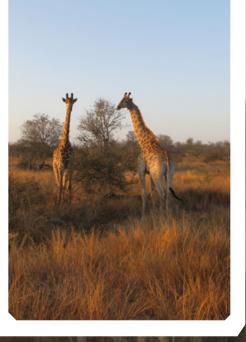
Kruger National Park is full of experiences like this. Encounters with the Big Five are almost guaranteed in South Africa's largest and second oldest safari park, which covers almost two million hectares in the country's northeast. And while other countries might argue they have better (or equal) wildlife, nowhere else can you combine city, beach and safari with such ease.

With three airports servicing Kruger's north, centre and popular south, you can go from beach to bushveld in no time. An extensive road network and range of camps within the park make self-drive safaris an attractive budget option. All camps provide accommodation and public facilities, while the larger camps also offer pools, shops and activities such as wildlife walks. Daily sightings boards at camps and the park's 10 entry gates will give you tips on where the wildlife is hanging out, with the noticeable exception of rhino sightings (illegal poaching still occurs each year).

Preferring to leave the navigation to the pros, I opted for the convenience of staying at a private game lodge on Kruger's outskirts, with the bonus of having meals and game viewing (both within the private reserve and in Kruger proper) included in the package. Private game reserves also give you the chance to get off-road for the sort of fence-free animal encounters that are essential safari experiences. In the expert hands of our guide Goodman we were soon spotting rhinos amongst the acacia tracts, stopping for literal zebra crossings, inquisitive hyenas and a passing elephant crèche, watching a lion pride preen and hippos fight, and even caught a rare leopard sighting. Just an average day in Greater Kruger.







KEY FACTS

Kruger National Park entry is R248 per day (adults) sanparks.org

Daily flights from Cape Town,
Durban and Johannesburg to
Kruger Mpumalanga International
Airport (KMIA). Private
Connections shuttle bus service
KMIA to Kruger National Park.
Hoedspruit Eastgate Airport from
Cape Town or Johannesburg.
Phalaborwa Airport from
Johannesburg only.

Intrepid Travel offer 3 and 5 Day Kruger Safari Lodge packages including lodge accommodation, guided Kruger and private game reserve safaris, most meals, and transfers ex Johannesburg from AU\$745. intrepidtravel.com.au

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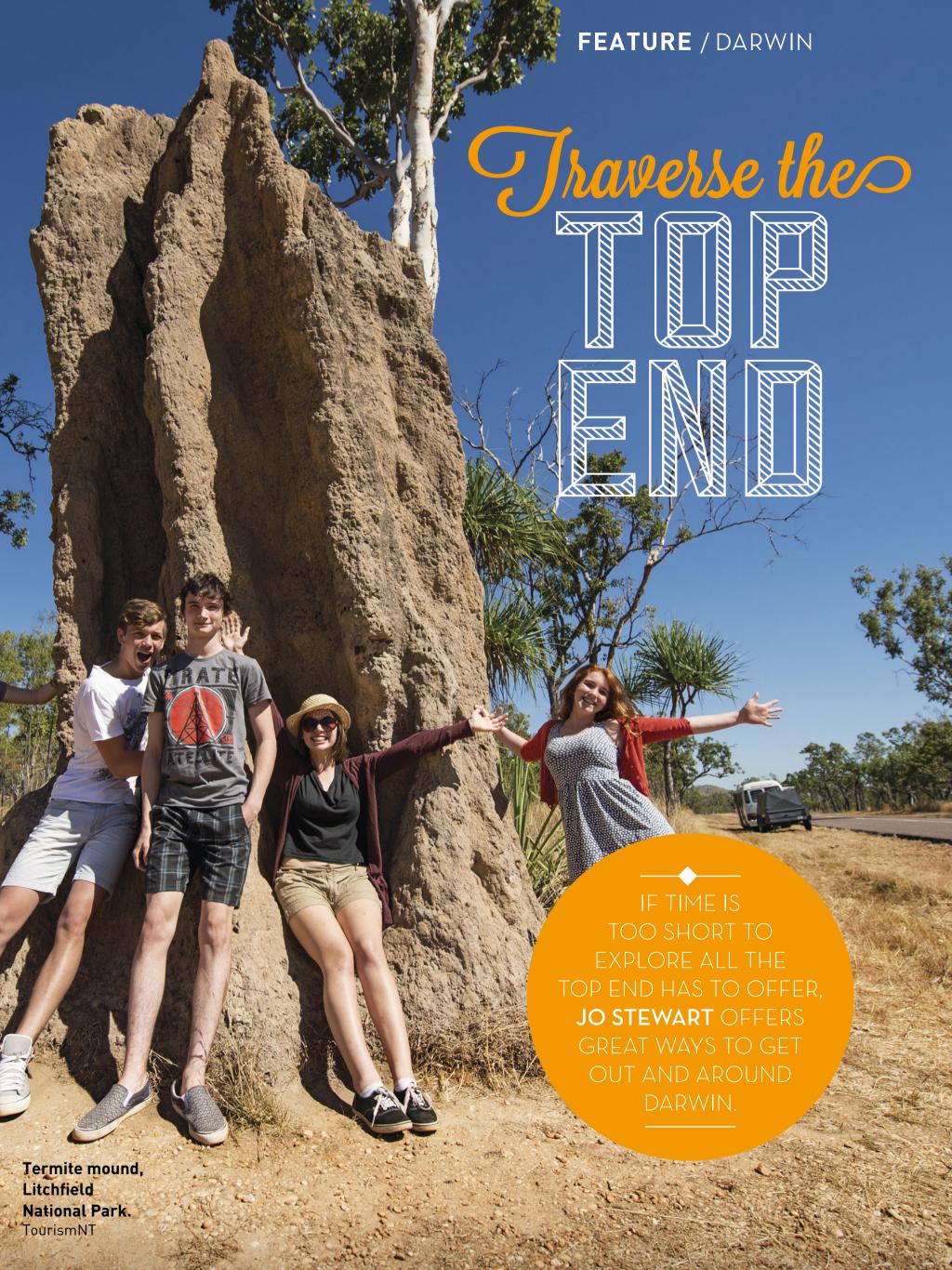
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some of Australia's most spiritual places, Darwin is the launching point for journeys into tropical terrain, hardy townships, wildlife-filled national parks and sacred indigenous sites. While the city of Darwin has enough bars, pubs, galleries and shops to keep most visitors busy, there's a whole world of wonder to discover on a day trip out of Darwin.

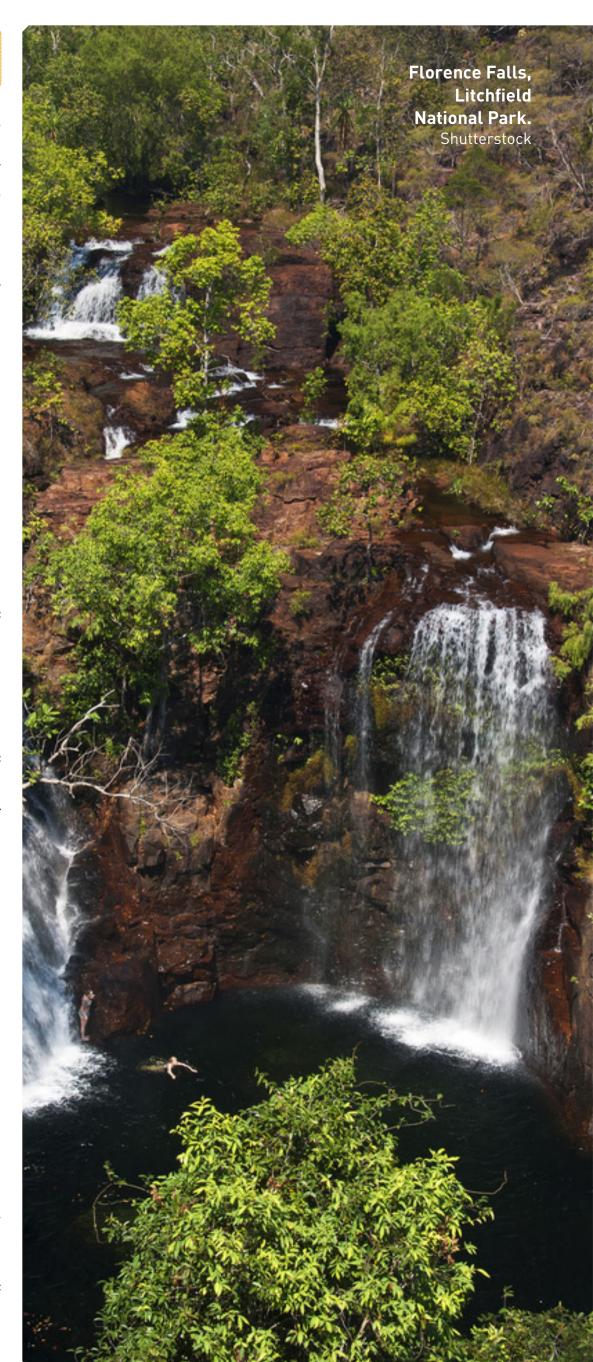
NATURE CALLS

An easy, 90 minute drive from Darwin, Litchfield National Park is an accessible, manageable alternative to Kakadu. Smaller in scale, but no less incredible, Litchfield is a top option for travellers who want to experience the wild, monsoonal beauty of the Top End in a short time frame.

Just before heading into Litchfield National Park, stop at the town of Batchelor and make a beeline for the General Store to stock up on picnic supplies and last minute essentials. The Tourist Information Centre here also stocks plenty of maps and brochures filled with handy tips of where to swim, park and hike in Litchfield. Pro tip: don't rely on your phone to access Google Maps as coverage is very limited here. It's best to stick to old-school paper maps.

This is absolutely sunscreen, water bottle, long-sleeved shirt, hat, sunglasses, insect repellent and sensible shoes territory. During the wet season, temperatures can get face-meltingly hot, so taking a dip is standard protocol for most visitors to these parts. Luckily, Litchfield National Park obliges with a range of near-perfect, croc-free billabongs, streams and water holes. As with everywhere in the Northern Territory, check signs before swimming anywhere as crocodiles are a very real threat.

On first sight, Florence Falls is one of those 'too good to be true' kind of places. Fringed by monsoon forest





CRUISE FOR CROCS

The product of about 80 million years of evolution, crocodiles once walked the earth alongside dinosaurs and other now long-extinct

beasts. If that thought isn't terrifying enough, due to a highly successful conservation program crocodile numbers have risen steeply in the Northern Territory over the past decade.

Getting up close to one of these fearsome beasts in the wild evokes a feeling of both awe and fear, and one of the safest ways to do this is to board a cruise that specialises in the patient art of 'croc watching'. A 90 minute drive out on the Arnhem Highway delivers visitors to the Adelaide River which is teeming with thousands of huge, saltwater crocodiles or 'salties'. Before boarding the boat there's plenty of time to take in the fear-inducing crocodile paraphernalia on show. From sensational crocodile-related headlines of newspapers gone by, to old photos of monster crocs captured in the decades before, there's enough here to put you off boarding the cruise at all.

Once aboard, the all-female crew take over and explain that the crocodiles in this part of the river are used to being fed, so it's not long before we see the ominous, long, stealthy shadow of a five metre, male crocodile gliding towards the boat. The moment at which he emerges out of the water to grab a big chunk of meat is truly primal. Witnessing those huge jaws snap shut like a lightning strike reminds us all of the immense power these predators possess, and how they've managed outlived everything else from their 'generation'.

TOP 5 DARWIN THINGS

- Mindil Markets From April to October, the place to be (and be seen) is at the sunset Mindil Markets. Great Asian food, super sunset, relaxing vibe.
- Wave Lagoon Cool off at Darwin's large wave pool with not a croc in sight. AU\$7.
- Museum and Art Gallery NT Great Aboriginal and Torres Strait art combined with history of settlement of the NT and legacy of Cyclone Tracy.
- Crocosaurus Cove Love 'em or loath 'em you can't go to the Territory and not have an up close encounter with their most famous residents. From AU\$32 p.p book at the YHA.
- World War II Tunnels
 Sounds weird, but these
 tunnels are a fascinating insight
 into Darwin life during WWII,
 as well as a cool spot on a hot
 tropical day. Entry only AU\$6.



Darwin is famous for its sunsets. Jo Stewart





FLEURIEU PENINSULA ART TRAIL

When you've had enough of slurping inky-black shiraz in South Australia's "red wine country", you can nourish the soul with a bit of gallery-hopping on the Fleurieu Peninsula Art Trail.

The McLaren Vale and Fleurieu Peninsula is a creative and artistic hub that celebrates the landscape in every possible way. But despite being surrounded by sea on three sides, many of the works produced in this area are not sunny images featuring blue-green waves crashing against sandy shores.

In fact, at any one time, the 20 different galleries that participate in the Art Trail showcase everything from the distinctive weaving traditions of the Ngarrindjeri people, to original fine art, sculpture, glass pottery, textiles, jewellery and paintings and prints of everything from wild bush flowers to flooded rivers and stark, lonely landscapes.

Visit any national or state gallery and you will find works by Hans Heysen, Dorrit Black, John Olsen, Horace Trenerry and Kathleen Sauerbier. All of these big names in Australian visual art have drawn inspiration from this vast and rugged land. Along the three-day drive, where grassy hills spill into the sea and cliffs and chasms meet, you will understand exactly why the landscapes around this dramatic peninsula so inspired Australia's greats.

Stroll down the main streets of McLaren Vale, Normanville and in the laneways of Port Noarlunga in Onkaparinga City (try saying that after a few glasses of shiraz) and you will find several art cooperatives and small galleries, stained glass workshops and quirky shops full of brica-brac, genuine antiques, junk and ephemera. The trail is identified in each destination by a purple flag.







WHERE TO STAY

PORT ELLIOT YHA

T: +61 8 8554 1885

E: portelliot@yha.com.au

vha.com.au





NORTHERN TERRITORY INDIGENOUS TOURS

The Top End often grabs headlines around the world because of the number of tourists that have been attacked by crocodiles while holidaying in the region. But as well as being Croc Dundee territory, the State is also home to some of Australia's oldest rock art galleries. Kakadu and Litchfield National Parks are two of the more well-known places to visit and who better to guide you through the environment than the 2013 winner of Ecotourism Australia Indigenous Tourism Award, Tess Akie.

Join Akie, of Northern Territory Indigenous Tours, on a tour through jade-green woodlands to the edge of the Arnhem Escarpment, where a local Kakadu guide will be on hand to interpret hand stencils painted in ochre pigments that have been around for at least 20,000 years.

Kakadu has about 5,000 rock art sites and Akie's tours offer a cultural interpretation of the ancient art from an indigenous viewpoint. Akie's tours include visits to hot springs and gorges and sites that are ecologically critical for wildlife such as the pig-nosed turtle and the freshwater whipray. Bush tucker is seasonal, but visitors can expect lunches of freshly cooked kangaroo, barramundi and crocodile as well as sides of yams, sugarcane grass and termite mound (which you are not advised to try at home!).





BUNDEENA-MAIANBAR ART TRAIL, NSW

For decades, the tiny townships of Bundeena and Maianbar, just south of Sydney, have attracted artists who have become linked by their love for their location. The adjacent villages are on the outer edges of NSW's Royal National Park, or 'Nashos' as it's known, and just a short ferry ride away from the sparkly beachside Sydney suburb of Cronulla.

On the first Sunday of every month, 20 of the resident artists fling open the paint-splattered doors to their studios to offer quests a glimpse into their working lives. Ask the trail secretary and exhibiting artist Doris Kaminski what the local collective of creative types draw their inspiration from and she'll happily tell you. "There is some sort of energy in this place that draws people who are creative spirits everyone from the musically inclined to painters and potters, too," says Doris, who specialises in figurative works and cityscapes using mixed media and acrylic on canvas.

Self-taught artist Peter Mulder, whose bold, acrylic landscapes are also inspired by the beauty of the rugged surrounds, created the Bundeena-Maianbar Art Trail in 2002. More than a decade on, Studio 8 on the art trail map is Jia Wei Shan, regarded as one of Australia's leading portrait artists. Jia Wei Shen's studio is one of the must-see stop-offs on the trail, which takes at least half a day to explore; he has been selected as a finalist in the Archibald Prize 16 times since he first submitted a work in 1992 and was recently invited to Rome to unveil the first official portrait of Pope Francis, which was commissioned by the Catholic Church (pictured below).

MORE INFO Bundeena-Maianbar Art Trail T: 9527 1318 arttrail.com.au



WHERE TO STAY

CRONULLA YHA

located just across the water from Bundeena - with a ferry connection.

T: +61 2 9527 7772

E: cronulla@yha.com.au

yha.com.au





ONE TRACK FOR ALL, NSW SOUTH COAST

One Track for All is a 2km trail that hugs the northern headland at Ulladulla about two hours' drive south of Sydney. Despite overlooking one of the most beautiful stretches of coastline on the NSW South Coast, this cliff-top walk offers so much more than just mind-bogglingly beautiful views.

The heritage track is made memorable by the fact it is dotted with exquisite relief carvings, paintings and striking sculptures. However, it's the stories told along the way that remain etched in your memory long after you've left the tiny harbour town.

The art trail, created by local Noel Butler, charts the history of the southern Shoalhaven region from an Aboriginal perspective. Here, subtlety is key and, much like the march of modernity itself, the impact of the stories isn't fully realised until all the messages – about "industry + technology + money = depletion" are brought home.

Butler presents cold, hard facts alongside wry observations and exquisite illustrations and sculptures – "shellfish was our traditional food; now it's AU\$50 a kg" – and in so doing gently reminds us that Australian Aboriginals were the nation's original eco warriors.

The name Ulladulla comes from the Aboriginal word Nulladulla, meaning "safe harbour". In honouring the history of his local Budawang tribe, Butler challenges those who use the track to look at what has happened – environmentally and economically in the Ulladulla area – and all around Australia – since the "strange-looking gunyah" arrived. It's his hope that we will "learn from the past in order to protect our future".

MORE INFO
Access to the trail is via Dolphin Street from the main street of Ulladulla.



WHERE TO STAY

BATEMAN'S BAY YHA

Less than an hour's drive from Ulladulla, and can be combined with a visit to the charming town of Milton.

T: +61 2 4472 4972

E: batemansbay@yha.com.au

yha.com.au



BOOK NOW

THE SUNSHINE COAST ART TRAIL

The Sunshine Coast has long been considered a compulsory pit-stop for those exploring the East Coast of Australia. But as well as being strewn with grizzled surfers, the southern Queensland region is now popular with tourists who want to get a fresh perspective on this lush southern Queensland region.

The beauty of the Sunshine Coast Art Gallery and Culture Trail is that you can be in the centre of a coastal town full of crusty hippies one minute and then cruising at snail's pace in the countryside the next.

A highlight of the self-guided tour is meeting some of the eccentric characters that contribute to the creative energy of the region. The cultural trail will lead you to galleries that showcase the work of leading local, national and international artists and craftspeople - from painters to potters, sculptors, jewellers and ceramic artists.

And, for dedicated shoppers, the fact that you can connect with the artisans means you get to learn, enjoy and perhaps even purchase a small memento of your trip.

The lush scenery along the complete trail - which is about 100km in distance – runs from Caloundra to Gympie and is like a beautiful work of art in its own right. But the beauty of such self-guided tours is that you can pick it up and leave it as you like. The entire trail takes about three days, but a shorter version of the trail - which takes in Eumundi, Kenilworth, Maleny and Montville – could be completed in a leisurely day's drive.







WHERE TO STAY

BRISBANE CITY YHA

T: +61 7 3236 1004

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yha.com.au

NOOSA YHA

T: +61 7 5547 3377

E: noosaheads@yha.com.au

yha.com.au



HERE'S OUR PICK OF EVENTS COMING UP IN YOUR REGION



Darwin's annual Beer Can Regatta on Sunday 6 July ... the day includes a packed

program of thong throwing, tug-o-war and sand castle contests. But the main draws are the homemade beer can boats that sink, swim and sabotage their competition at

Mindil Beach.

BOOK NOW

In the Red Centre, Alice Springs boasts not one but two race days with a difference. First up is the hotly contested Camel Cup on 12 July. Stick around for the hilarious Henley-on-Todd on 16 August and watch the bottomless boats and bathtubs battle it out on the dry riverbed. If arts and entertainment are more your thing, check out the

Darwin Festival from 7-24 August, or September's Desert Mob and Alice

Desert Festival.

Stay at Darwin YHA or Alice Springs YHA



SYDNEY WINTER FESTIVAL

13 June -13 July 2014

Get your skates on and hit the Sydney Winter Festival for some "cool



Yule". Much missed last year, this enchanting mid-year favourite is back. Darling Harbour will be transformed into a winter wonderland, complete with outdoor ice rink, Zorb Balls on Cockle Bay, alpine huts serving winter warming goodies like bratwurst, gluwhein and roasted chestnuts. Plus, there's free festive entertainment including themed nights, skating performances, live music and DJs. Book ice skating and skate hire online from AU\$28.50. winterfestival.com.au

......

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......

BOOK

NOW

- Stay at YHA Queenstown Central or YHA Queenstown Lakefront
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QUEENSTOWN WINTER FESTIVAL

20-29 June 2014

Some contend it's the Southern Hemisphere's biggest winter party:



BOOK NOW

a 10-day full-on celebration of all things Queenstown. Celebrate winter with street parties, ice skating, fireworks, craft markets, and a buzzing Mardi Gras atmosphere that spreads from the mountain slopes to the lively town centre. There's plenty of guirky action on and off the region's legendary ski slopes with the furry favourite Dog Derby, ice hockey league, and on-snow mountain biking and suitcase races all returning. Brave souls can splash into the nippy waters of Lake Wakatipu or warm up with the Hot Tub Sessions. All these exciting activities go hand in hand with Queenstown's dramatic backdrop of snow-capped mountain peaks, blue skies and glacial lake. winterfestival.co.nz

AIRLIE BEACH RACE WEEK

8-15 August 2014

Celebrating 25 years in 2014, this weeklong regatta is the perfect time to experience the magnificent Whitsundays. Migrating whales, reef-fringed islands and tropical waters teeming with fish are added bonuses. Watch the racing from the shore, join in the Great Whitsunday Fun Race, take up a water sport, or catch the variety of events and activities throughout the week. abrw.com.au



Stay at Airlie Beach YHA

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Airlie Beach Race Fish Media

OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE

26-27 July 2014

Take a sticky beak inside more than 100 of Melbourne's most memorable and unusual places. Open House Melbourne gives the public a rare (and free) opportunity to discover the city's wealth of award-winning private residences, historic gems, national monuments, architectural and engineering marvels for the weekend. openhousemelbourne.org



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The statewide South Australian Living Artists (SALA) Festival celebrates

SA's top talent in visual arts. Featuring over 3,000 amateur and established artists and around 500 innovative exhibits in spaces ranging from wineries and cafes to galleries and shops, this truly unique festival is also absolutely free.

salafestival.com





Choose from 8 YHAs in South Australia

WORLD OF WEARABLEART

25 September - 12 October 2014

Step into another world where wondrous and warped artistic visions transform the human body into canvas; where fashion, art and theatre collide. Step into the World of WearableArt™ (WOW®), a design competition attracting designers from around the world whose creations are staged in a theatrical performance of dance, colour and movement. You'll be WOWed in Wellington with New Zealand's largest and most dynamic art event that has been described as "Mardi Gras meets haute couture". But plan ahead! Tickets sell out and beds fill up well in advance. worldofwearableart.com







All images courtesy of World of Wearable Art



Get a sneak preview here



◆ Stay at YHA Wellington

- 0800 278 299 (NZ) or 1800 242 191 (Aus)
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MATARIKI FESTIVAL

June - July 2014

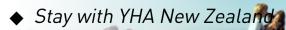
When the Matariki star clusters (Pleiades) rise in the winter skies the Māori

New Year will begin. And so too will begin celebrations across New Zealand that include a dawn ceremony, music performances, Kapa Haka, a midwinter carnival, theatre, poetry, dance, art, astronomy, kite flying, storytelling and lantern parades. From the Matariki Festival in Auckland to the Puaka Matariki Festival in Dunedin and all of the festivals in between, Matariki is about community, looking to the future and giving thanks to the land, the sea and the sky. matarikievents.co.nz





Brisbane break is not complete without attending an iconic Australian Rugby League or AFL game. Cheer on the Brisbane Broncos at Suncorp Stadium or the Brisbane Lions at The Gabba! Tickets are available at Brisbane City YHA. See online for dates.



▶ 0800 278 299 (NZ) or 800 2 2 191 (Aus

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WILDFLOWER SEASON

Until October 2014

Western Australia's rugged landscape will soon be ablaze with the scent and vibrant colour of one of the most spectacular wildflower displays in the world.

In August, Kalbarri National Park becomes a 186,000-hectare kaleidoscope of banksias, grevilleas, kangaroo paws, flowering eucalypts and paperbark blossoms. September sees Esperence,

BOOK NOW Denmark, Albany and Margaret River spring to life with delicate dainty orchids, milkmaids, honeypots and mountain bells.

◆ YHA has hostels in all these WA destinations

BOOK AHEAD

Cold climate bulbs are the order of the day in Canberra when more than one million blooms come alive for **Floriade** - the largest flower festival in the Southern Hemisphere – from 13 September to 12 October 2014. Book your **Canberra City YHA** bed

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL

31 July – 17 August 2014

FILM FESTIVAL

Australia's biggest celebration of celluloid returns to Melbourne for 18 days of films and famous faces. A whopping 300 flicks from more than 50 countries will hit the screens across the CBD, from premieres, movie marathons, cult classics and Q & A sessions, to retrospectives, rare gems, prize-winners and festival favourites from Cannes, Berlin and Toronto. Tickets, passes and program details at miff.com.au.



BOOK NOW

- ◆ Stay at Melbourne Central YHA
- ◆ +61 3 9621 2523
- ♠ melbcentral@yha.com.au



PEMBERTON MUSIC FESTIVAL

18-20 July 2014

Stay Pemberton YHA

MELBOURNE CABARET FESTIVAL

19 June - 6 July 2014

Stay Melbourne Central YHA

THE ROCKS AROMA FESTIVAL

21 July 2014

Stay Sydney Harbour YHA

BAROSSA GOURMET WEEKEND

15-17 August 2014

Stay Adelaide Central YHA





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